

When using a sunscreen, remember:

- ✓ apply it 15-30 minutes before going out in the sun
- ✓ apply to clean, dry skin and rub in only lightly
- ✓ apply frequently and ensure even coverage
- ✓ re-apply every 2 hours or more if washed, towelled, rubbed or sweated off
- ✓ put on before make-up, moisturiser, insect repellent etc

Sun Beds

Avoid using sun-beds. It is now known that the UVA radiation emitted by sun-beds can contribute to **skin cancer** as well as **ageing skin prematurely**. A tan produced by UVA only, does not thicken the skin as natural sunlight does and therefore offers little protection against sunburn – perhaps at best the equivalent of an SPF 4 sunscreen. Long term frequent use of a sun-bed can cause permanent damage to your skin.

Sun-beds should never be used by:

- ✱ The under 16's
- ✱ People who burn easily and tan poorly – those with pale skin, fair or red hair
- ✱ People using medication that could make their skin more sensitive
- ✱ People who have had skin cancer or have a family history of it
- ✱ People with a lot of freckles or moles

Risks from sun-bed use:

- ✱ Burnt and peeling skin
- ✱ Dry and itchy skin or a rash
- ✱ Eye infections including conjunctivitis
- ✱ Premature skin ageing and wrinkling
- ✱ Increased risks of cataracts in the eye
- ✱ Increased risk of skin cancer

If you would like a skin cancer factsheet or information on cancer prevention and screening visit www.cobalthhealth.co.uk

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Time
to be
SunSmart

time to
prevent
skin cancer



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Sun fun with care

Moderate exposure to the sun can be beneficial – it can make us feel good. Our bodies need sunshine to make vitamin D, but most of us get all the sun we need from our daily routine.

Your risk of developing skin cancer depends on your skin type. Nobody's skin is completely safe in the sun but some skin types such as people with large numbers of moles, freckled skin, fair or red hair and light coloured eyes are more likely to burn.

Be SunSmart – you can still enjoy being outside in the good weather by finding shade under umbrellas, trees, canopies or cover up with a wide brimmed hat and loose comfortable clothing.

It's true that skin cancer is rare in children. Damage to the DNA of our skin cells when young, may develop into skin cancer 15-30 years later. We know that children's skin is naturally more delicate and prone to damage from the sun's rays. **We get around 80% of our sun exposure by the age of 21.**

How to be SunSmart

- ✓ avoid the sun between 11am-3pm
- ✓ take care never to burn
- ✓ use shade whenever possible
- ✓ take extra care of babies' and children's delicate skin
- ✓ wear a wide brimmed hat and sunglasses with UV protection
- ✓ cover up with loose fitting clothing
- ✓ use a broad spectrum sunscreen of 15+
- ✓ avoid using sunbeds
- ✓ check your skin regularly and report any unusual changes to your doctor

Babies under six months are even more at risk because their skin has not yet developed all its natural defences. They should be kept out of the sun at all times.

Buying sunscreen

Remember sunscreens alone do not offer total protection from sun damage. They should be used to increase our protection when we are out in the sun without adequate shade or clothing.

Use factor 15+

The sun protection factor (SPF) of a sunscreen is a measure of its ability to filter out dangerous UVB rays. The higher the factor the more protection you get from burning. Higher factor sunscreens tend to be more expensive and no matter how high the factor you cannot get 100% protection.

factor 15 sunscreen offers 93%
factor 30 sunscreen offers 96%
factor 60 sunscreen offers 98%

Factor 15 offers the best balance between protection and price – choose one that:

- ☺ is labelled 'broad spectrum' to protect against UVA and UVB
- ☺ is water resistant
- ☺ has a valid use by date
- ☺ is SPF 15 or higher